

# **When Older Students Cannot Read: A Practical Guide**

**Frank Smith**

[frank@franksmithconsulting.com](mailto:frank@franksmithconsulting.com)



# Special Challenges of Secondary Literacy

Ensuring adequate ongoing literacy development for all students in the middle and high school years is a more challenging task than ensuring excellent reading education in the primary grades, for two reasons: first, secondary school literacy skills are more complex, more embedded in subject matters and more multiply determined; second, adolescents are not as universally motivated to read better or as interested in school-based reading as kindergartners.

Biancarosa & Snow (2006)

# Five Crucial Recommendations for Adolescent Literacy Instruction

- Provide explicit instruction in the use of strategies throughout the school day
- Increase amount and quality of discussion of reading content
- High standards for text, conversations and vocabulary
- Increase motivation and engagement with reading
- Teach essentials so all students master them

*Academic Literacy Instruction For Adolescents (2007)*

## Six Essential Areas of 4-8 Reading Growth

- Reading fluency and decoding
- Vocabulary knowledge
- Domain-specific and domain-general content knowledge
- Higher-level reasoning and thinking skills
- Cognitive strategies that enhance reading comprehension
- Motivation and engagement

*Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents (2007)*

# ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS



Before Reading  
During Reading  
After Reading

## Why might you want to teach multisyllabic word-attack?

- Necessary for comprehension
  - Word recognition is a necessary, though not sufficient, skill to allow comprehension.
  - You can decode without being fluent but you can't be fluent without being able to decode and both are needed for comprehension

# Why might you want to teach multisyllabic word-attack?

- The “Matthew Effect”
  - Students with low word recognition and fluency skills will read less. “The rich get richer. The poor get poorer.” (Stanovich, 1986)
- What are some of the advantages of reading more volume?
  1. Decoding
  2. Fluency
  3. Vocabulary & Concept Development
  4. General Knowledge
  5. Writing
  6. Spelling

# Needed Preskills

- Vowel combinations
- Vowel conversion
- Underline vowel sounds in words
- Correcting close approximations using context
- Pronouncing word parts
- Identify & circling words parts



# Vowel Combinations

ay  
(say)

ai  
(rain)

au  
(sauce)

er  
(her)

ir  
(bird)

ur  
(turn)

## Correction Close Approximation Using Context

hotel      When we were on vacation, we  
                 stayed in a hotel.

cradle      The baby is sleeping the  
                 cradle.

# Word Parts at the Beginning & End of Words

dis	discover
mis	mistaken
ab	abdomen
ad	advertise

s	birds
ing	running
ed	landed
ness	kindness
less	useless
able	notable
tion	action

# Overt Strategy for Reading Long Words

1. Circle the word parts (prefixes) at the beginning of the word.
2. Circle the word parts (suffixes) at the end of the word.
3. Underline the letters representing vowel sounds in the rest of the word.
4. Say the parts of the word
5. Say the parts fast
6. Make it into a real word.

Example

reconstruction

## Covert Strategy for Reading Long Words

1. Look for word parts at the beginning an end of the word, and vowel sounds in the rest of the word.
2. Say the parts of the word.
3. Say the parts fast.
4. Make it a real word.

# Some Possible Programs

- Reading Mastery
- PALS
- Corrective Reading – Decoding
- REWARDS
- SIPPS
- Language!
- Read 180

# What is fluency?

- Fluency is a measurement of behavior which utilizes rate and accuracy.
- It is often used interchangeably with the term automaticity.
- In regards to reading, it must be accompanied with prosody.

# What does fluency look like?

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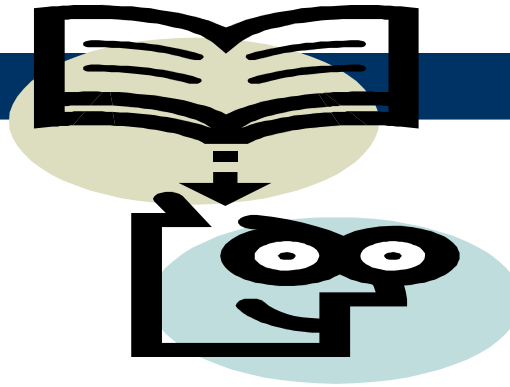
# THE GENERAL OUTCOMES OF FLUENCY IN ANY SKILL ARE.....

- Retention
- Endurance
- Application



These factors are often voiced as areas of concern by teachers.

# HOW DOES FLUENCY RELATE TO READING?



“.....if fluent word recognition does not produce a clearly identified word in working memory, comprehension processes do not have the raw materials to operate efficiently and understanding of text will be impaired”

Keith Stanovich, 1991

## Relation to Comprehension

Differences in reading fluency have demonstrated the ability to differentiate between good and poor readers and reliably predict reading comprehension.

Stanovich, 1991

# The Bottom Line

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- Fluency is clearly related to comprehension
- Fluency does not guarantee comprehension
- Lack of fluency virtually guarantees impaired comprehension
- Fluency makes the student's job much easier

## Remember!

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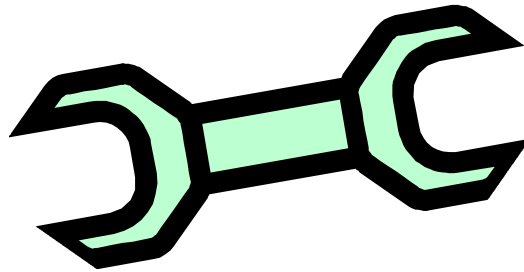
You can not practice what you are not able to do. Practice for fluency can only occur once a skill has been acquired at no less than a basic level.

Peladeau, Forget and Gagne (2003) found that practice beyond mastery increased long-term retention and was also associated with positive attitudes towards subject matter and courses.

# Factors in Formal Practice

- Advantages
  - Data-based decision making
  - High level of monitoring
  - Rate criteria
  - Assists at-risk learners
- Disadvantages
  - Set-up more complicated
  - Less flexible contexts for use
  - Less accommodating of complex tasks

# TOOLS TO TEACH TO FLUENCY



*The Six Minute Solution*

*Read Naturally*

*Quick Reads*

*Great Leaps*

*Skill Builders*

# Factors in Informal Practice

- Advantages
  - More flexible
  - Easier to plan for
  - Less preparation
  - More accommodating of complex tasks
- Disadvantages
  - Little or no data-based decision making
  - Less control
  - Little or no criteria for rate



# Expository and Narrative Text

**Best**, Floyd and McNamara (2008)

- Narrative are often understood better than expository text
- Word knowledge and decoding have differential effects on comprehension of expository and narrative text
- Narrative text comprehension most effected by decoding skills
- Expository text comprehension most effected by word knowledge skills

# Benefits of Content Fluency Work

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Hiebert and Fisher (2002) found that a 9-week period of repeated reading in expository text from the science and social studies areas significantly improved the reading rates of both native English speakers and English language learners.

# What is needed to build fluency in oral reading?

- Explicit modeling
- Multiple opportunities to “independently” read familiar text
- Corrective feedback
- Performance criteria

Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler (2002)

# ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT PASSAGE READING PROCEDURES

- Choral reading
- Cloze reading
- Whisper/silent reading
- Paired/partner reading



## Procedures for Partner Reading

- Stronger readers are paired with weaker readers
- Teacher may provide model for chosen reading passage
- Partners take turns reading the passage to one another
- Often the weaker reader repeats what the stronger reader just read.

## Some Informative Research

- High School seniors near the top of their class knew about *four* times as many words as their lower-performing classmates (Smith, 1941).
- High knowledge third graders had vocabularies about *equal* to the lowest performing 12th graders (Smith, 1941).



# Why should we teach vocabulary knowledge?



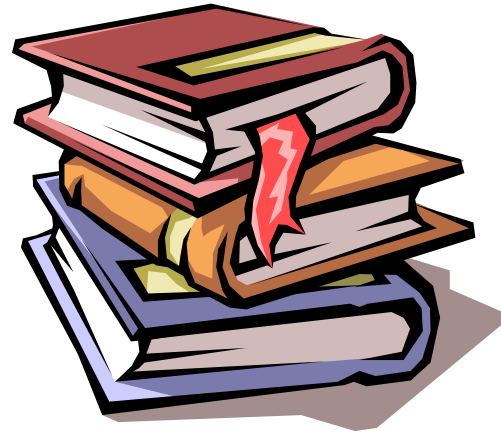
# Reasons to Teach Vocabulary Knowledge

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_



# Where do students learn vocabulary?

1. Unplanned Oral Discussion
2. Reading/Context
3. Direct Teaching



# The Outside Reading Conundrum

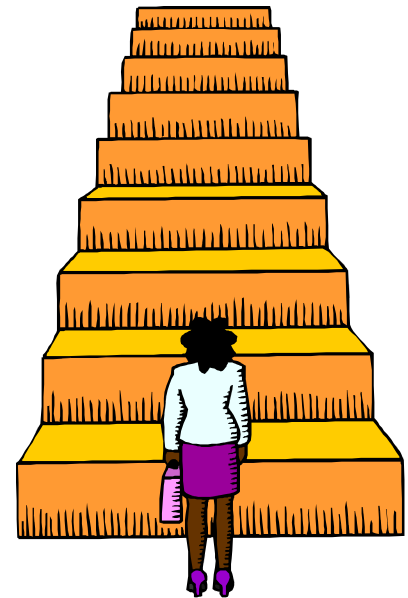
A student at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in outside reading volume will read more in two days than a student at the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile will read in a whole school year.

Anderson, Wilson and Fielding (1998)

This increases inequities!!!!!!!

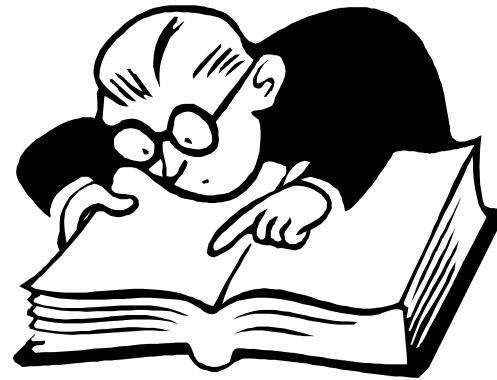
# Steps in an effective vocabulary development program

1. Choose probable candidates
2. Check for prior knowledge
3. Directly teach words
4. Practice
5. Generalize



# Chosen Words Must....

- appear frequently
- be of high utility
- expand existing student knowledge
- appear across domains



# Checking For Prior Knowledge

Keep it simple.

1. *Make lists for students.*
2. *Check group – “thumbs up”.*
3. *Occasional individual check.*
4. *Look for group mastery rate.*



# TELL THEM WHAT IT MEANS!

- Context is not sufficient
- Mere exposure leaves the definition unclear
- Supply students a definition
- This helps ensure all students have a clear definition of the word
- This builds a stronger connection

# What is “active learning”?

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Active learning involves providing opportunities for students to meaningfully talk and listen, write, read, and reflect on the content, ideas, issues and concerns of an academic subject.

Meyers & Jones, 1993

# Types Active Engagement

- Group oral responses
- Paired partner responses
- Individual oral responses
- Written responses
- Physical responses

- Anita Archer



# EIGHT STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING COMPREHENSION

Adapted from *Put Reading First* and Pressley (2002)

- Monitoring comprehension
- Building background knowledge
- Using graphic and semantic organizers
- Answering questions
- Generating questions
- Recognizing story structure
- Summarizing
- Visualize

# Cognitive Strategies

Because cognitive strategies are heuristics, they do not provide the same step by step procedures that one would find in a algorithm. Instead, cognitive strategies provide a guide that helps students by guiding them and enabling them to perform higher level operations.

# Steps for Strategy Instruction

Adapted from Pressley (1992)

- Teach a small group of strategies
- Teach the strategies directly
- Practice and have students model and demonstrate thoroughly
- Teach when and where to use
- Teach the strategy specific vocabulary

Always teach these strategies  
with.....

**I DO IT!**

**WE DO IT!**

**YOU DO IT!**



# Comprehension Monitoring

Effective readers monitor their comprehension by thinking about their thinking. They are aware of what they understand and are able to identify breakdowns in their comprehension. They use “fix up” strategies when they run into problems.

# Fix-up Strategies

- Reread
- “Mark” where the difficulty occurs
- Review previously read portions to clarify meaning
- Read ahead
- Take the problematic phrase and place in your own words
- Adjust the reading rate

# The Importance of Background Knowledge

The extent that students will learn new academic content is dependent on these crucial factors:

- teacher instructional skill
- student interest
- complexity of content/instruction
- necessary background knowledge

What students already know about content, background knowledge, had a .66 correlation factor to what they would learn. (Marzano,2004)

# Difference Between Activating and Building

**Activating background knowledge** assumes that the crucial knowledge is already in place. It is often associated with building student interest in the coming topic.

**Building background knowledge** assumes that the crucial knowledge is not in place and therefore the focus on instruction is making sure that knowledge is acquired before further instruction in the target standard is pursued.



# Hints for Graphic Organizers

- Use fewer when possible
- Teach and practice them to mastery
- Not all organizers are created equally
- Keep it simple
- I do.....We do.....You do.....
- Review over time

# Question Generation

The heart of question generation is asking students to form questions while they are reading. This improves their active engagement with the text and reduces the amount of passiveness. Question generation during the reading helps repair comprehension before problems become compounded.

# Question Answering

- Question answering INSTRUCTION can help students get more from their reading by showing them how to find and use information from the text to answer different types of questions.
- QAR (Question Answer Relationship) has been shown to increase students' ability to interact with text

# Identifying Story Structure

- Main Character
- Setting
- Start
- Conclusion
- Goals
- Climax
- Outcomes

# PARAGRAPH SHRINKING

FUCHS, MATHES, AND FUCHS

1. Name the who or what.
2. Tell the most important thing about the who or what.
3. Say the main idea in 10 words or less

# Visualize Through IEPC

Young (1989)

- Imagine
- Elaborate
- Predict
- Confirm